

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and listings:

Claims 1. - 88. (canceled).

89. (currently amended): A method of providing active user feedback in a graphic user interface including an adjustable soft control able to change an attribute of an object over a continuous range of attribute values, said method comprising steps of:

detecting positioning of a pointing device over the soft control, said positioning designating the soft control;

displaying a window upon designation of the soft control;

displaying a representation of the object in the window; and

animating the displayed representation of the object to mimic an effect on the attribute of a nominal adjustment of the soft control, said animation being presented in the window as a training preview exemplifying the nature of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from adjustment of the soft control.

90. (previously presented): A method according to claim 89, wherein the animating step mimics an effect on the attribute by varying a corresponding attribute of the displayed representation over a part of the range of attribute values.

91. (currently amended): A method according to claim 89, wherein said preview window is superimposed on ~~[[the]]~~ a display area of said graphic user interface.

92. (previously presented): A method according to claim 89, wherein the representation of the object is a symbolic object whose shape is adapted to reflect a change in the value of said attribute corresponding to said nominal adjustment.

93. (previously presented): A method according to claim 89, wherein said step of displaying a window is capable of being one of enabled and inhibited.

94. (currently amended): A method according to claim 89, wherein:
the method comprises a step of displaying a representation of the adjustable soft control; and:

the animating step further comprises showing, in ghost form in the window, said nominal adjustment of the soft control corresponding to the animation of the displayed representation of the object.

95. (previously presented): A method according to claim 89, wherein the preview window can be customized by defining user preferences.

96. (currently amended): A method according to claim 95, wherein the customization comprises at least one of:

setting a nature of the change[[s]], and
setting a range of the change.

97. (previously presented): A method according to claim 89, further comprising the step of coupling another soft control to said soft control, wherein the

change implementable by the soft control is dependent upon a current setting of the other soft control.

98. (previously presented): A computer readable medium storing a computer program for providing active user feedback in a graphic user interface including an adjustable soft control able to change an attribute of an object over a continuous range of attribute values, said program comprising:

code for detecting positioning of a pointing device over the soft control, said positioning designating the soft control;

code for displaying a window upon designation of the soft control;

code for displaying a representation of the object in the window; and

code for animating the displayed representation of the object to mimic an effect on the attribute of a nominal adjustment of the soft control, said animation being presented in the window as a training preview exemplifying the nature of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from adjustment of the soft control.

99. (previously presented): A medium according to claim 98, wherein said code for animating mimics an effect on the attribute by varying a corresponding attribute of the displayed representation over a part of the range of attribute values.

100. (currently amended): A medium according to claim 98, wherein said preview window is superimposed on ~~[[the]]~~ a display area of said graphic user interface.

101. (previously presented): A medium according to claim 98, wherein the representation of the object is a symbolic object whose shape is adapted to reflect a change in the value of said attribute corresponding to said nominal adjustment.

102. (previously presented): A medium according to claim 98, wherein the representation of the object is a literal representation of the object whose shape is adapted to reflect a change in the value of the attribute corresponding to said nominal adjustment.

103. (previously presented): A medium according to claim 98, wherein said code for displaying a window is capable of being one of enabled and inhibited.

104. (currently amended): A medium according to claim 98, further comprising:

code for displaying a representation of the adjustable soft control; and

wherein the code for the animating step further comprises:

code for showing, in ghost form in the window, said nominal adjustment of the soft control corresponding to the animation of the displayed representation of the object.

105. (previously presented): A medium according to claim 98, wherein the preview window can be customized by defining user preferences.

106. (previously presented): A medium according to claim 105, wherein the customization comprises at least one of:

setting a nature of the change; and

setting a range of the change.

107. (previously presented): A medium according to claim 98, further comprising the code for a coupling step for coupling another soft control to said soft control, wherein the change implementable by the soft control is dependent upon a current setting of the other soft control.

108. (previously presented): An apparatus for providing active user feedback in a graphic user interface including an adjustable soft control able to change an attribute of an object over a continuous range of attribute values, said apparatus comprising:

a screen counter detection controller for controlling detecting positioning of a pointing device over the soft control, said positioning designating the soft control;

a window display controller for controlling displaying a window upon designation of the soft control;

an object representation display controller for controlling displaying a representation of the object in the window; and

a display animation controller for controlling animating the displayed representation of the object to mimic an effect on the attribute of a nominal adjustment of the soft control, said animation being presented in the window as a training preview

exemplifying the nature of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from adjustment of the soft control.

109. and 110. (canceled).

111. (currently amended): A method according to claim 89, comprising the further steps of:

adjusting the soft control in a continuous temporal manner; and

animating the displayed representation of the object in response to the ~~detecting~~ adjusting step, said animation being presented in the window as a preview exemplifying the effect of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from said adjusting of the soft control.

112. (previously presented): A method according to claim 111, comprising the further steps of:

releasing the designation of the soft control; and

changing a display of the object in a display area of the graphical user interface in response to the releasing of the soft control.

113. (previously presented): A computer readable medium according to claim 98, further comprising:

code for adjusting the soft control in a continuous temporal manner; and

code for animating the displayed representation of the object in response to the adjusting step, said animation being presented in the window as a preview

exemplifying the effect of change in said attribute that can be expected to arise from said adjusting of the soft control.

114. (previously presented): A computer readable medium according to claim 113, further comprising:

code for releasing the designation of the soft control; and

code for changing a display of the object in a display area of the graphical user interface in response to the releasing of the soft control.

115. (currently amended): An apparatus according to claim 108, further comprising:

a designating release controller for controlling releasing the designation of the soft control; and

an object display controller for controlling changing a display of the object in a display area of the graphical user interface in response to the releasing of the soft control.